

*Order of Business*

triggering the need by the Government of Canada to declare an emergency under the terms of this act.

I am looking at the clock, and with your permission, Mr. Speaker, I would like to call it five o'clock and resume my remarks on this important aspect of the bill after the adjournment.

[Translation]

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of private members' business as listed on today's order paper, namely public bills, private bills and notices of motions.

● (1700)

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' PUBLIC BILLS

[English]

### POINT OF ORDER

MR. HERBERT—BILL C-232—RETENTION OF POSITION ON ORDER PAPER

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Before dealing with the order of business which according to the order paper will be called today, we might attempt to complete discussion on the point of order raised by the hon. member for Vaudreuil (Mr. Herbert) on March 16 and give hon. members who have indicated their interest in this matter an opportunity to express their point of view.

As hon. members are aware, on March 16 the hon. member for Vaudreuil raised as a point of order the fact that Bill C-232, to amend the Holidays Act, having been considered at report stage and debated at the third reading stage on March 13, 1979, ought to have retained its precedence on the order paper and remained at the beginning of the list of private members' business, public bills. Some members from both sides have already expressed opinions on the issue. Unless they have something new to add, I hope they will not repeat the contribution they have already made. I will give priority to those who have not yet contributed to the debate. Following this discussion, I hope to make a decision this afternoon.

**Mr. Gordon Towers (Red Deer):** Mr. Speaker, speaking strictly to the point of order, I believe the suggestion made by the hon. member for Vaudreuil (Mr. Herbert) is entirely out of order. According to the customs of this House, after having been debated for an hour in the House, a private member's bill automatically falls to the bottom of the list. I do not intend to speak long. Some of my colleagues will also have something to say on this bill.

I wish to give Your Honour a precedent. The hon. member for Windsor-Walkerville (Mr. MacGuigan) presented Bill C-208, referred to as the Heritage Day bill, which also was a bill dealing with the Holidays Act. It was handled in exactly the same way as this bill has been handled. First reading was

[Mr. Gillespie.]

given October 15, 1974, page 374 of *Hansard*. Second reading was given on March 18, 1975. At that time the motion was put by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) for the hon. member for Windsor-Walkerville, presumably because the hon. member for Windsor-Walkerville was not in attendance. That can be found at pages 4215 and 4216 of *Hansard*.

The bill was reported from the Standing Committee on Justice and Legal Affairs and amended to "National Heritage Day" on April 22, 1975, page 5079 of *Hansard*. Third reading was debated February 13, 1976, pages 10944 to 10951 of *Hansard*. One hour was allotted to that private member's bill. The time expired and it went to the bottom of the list. I suggest if Your Honour does otherwise today, you will be setting a precedent since this has never happened.

**Mr. Donald W. Munro (Esquimalt-Saanich):** Mr. Speaker, my intervention will also be brief. First I want to correct a misunderstanding I had when I made my preliminary comments. I thought at that time we were still at report stage, but we were, of course, at third reading stage of that bill.

I wish to present an argument to your Honour with regard to the order in which this bill should stand, namely at the bottom of the list of private members' bills, and take its turn. To accept the suggestion that this bill remain at the top of the list would give no opportunity for any other bill to have second reading. In other words, if there had been an inclination, as I suspect there may have been, to carry this particular bill and read it out each time, we would never have reached order No. 9, No. 13 and, most important, No. 16 standing in the name of the hon. member for Esquimalt-Saanich.

I feel we should not be deprived of the opportunity to present our bills, each of us in our turn, the hon. member for Burnaby-Richmond-Delta (Mr. Siddon) and the hon. member for Prince George-Peace River (Mr. Oberle). An opportunity should be given for each of these bills to have second reading and not be pre-empted by having a bill which has been dealt with at second reading and report stage, at the suggestion of the mover of that bill, remain at the top of the list to the detriment of other bills.

**Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham):** Mr. Speaker, as I understand the situation, and I know that you or some member of the House will correct me if I am wrong, the long-standing tradition has been that we simply do not have enough time to deal in a sensible and fair way with the large number of private bills presented by private members in this House so that each one has a full hearing and reaches its logical conclusion with an eventual vote. Obviously there are not enough hours in the day, days in the week and weeks in the month to do this with the very large number of private members' bills that are presented.

Every year there is a draw made. That is an eminently fair way of handling it. That draw picks out the priority for each of these private members' bills. They are then presented to the House in that order of priority. From time immemorial it has always been the gambit of the government in power, no matter